

OFF THE STREET CLUB



Executive Director Opportunity Guide

offthestreetclub.com

About Off the Street Club

Off The Street Club (OTSC or “the Club”) is Chicago’s oldest boys and girls club, serving young people in the West Garfield Park neighborhood, one of the city’s most challenged and under-resourced communities. For 125 years, OTSC has been a safe, steady, and unwavering presence for children growing up amid poverty, gang activity, and limited access to opportunity. The Club’s long history is rooted in deep community trust and generational impact.

More than just a physical space, OTSC provides a safe and supportive oasis that builds a foundation of values, community, friendship, and family. Their approach is holistic as they provide a myriad of activities that enable kids to find their passions, showcase their talents, and build confidence, while investing significantly in academic support programs to help kids succeed in a challenging CPS system.

Over the years, many former OTSC participants have pursued higher education at institutions such as Illinois State University, Chicago State, Northern Illinois University, North Central College, Columbia College, and Dominican University. Alumni have gone on to build meaningful careers in fields such as healthcare, marketing, business, advertising, banking, and entrepreneurship. Their achievements reflect the Club’s enduring, life-changing impact and its role in shaping generations of strong, capable, and community-minded leaders.

PROGRAMS OF PROMISE & EMPOWERMENT

At its heart, OTSC serves as a sanctuary, offering a diverse array of programs designed to replace the daily threats of the neighborhood with what the Club calls “Casual Joy.” Serving more than 2,500 youth, the Club’s young members engage in mentorship and tutoring programs like Time to Excel, which pair students with professionals to foster academic growth and confidence. The facility is a hub of activity, featuring a Performing Arts Center where kids explore theater and music, a Girls Center dedicated to empowerment and self-esteem, and a Computer Learning Center for digital literacy. From the “United Center West” gymnasium to the woodshop and art rooms, every program is structured to provide a safe, productive outlet where children are inspired and empowered to dream boldly, grow confidently, and thrive.

OFF THE STREET CLUB PROGRAMMING

- Tutoring/mentoring programs
- Athletic programs
- Computer learning center
- Performing Arts Center, including a traveling choir, the Jazz Masters workshop, and theater
- Girls Center
- Recreation center, including roller skating arena
- Early childhood center
- Gaming
- Arts & Crafts
- New Horizons field trips and outreach
- Day camp at the club in the summer

About Off the Street Club



CAMP MATHIEU

Located 30 miles west of Chicago's urban landscape, Camp Mathieu provides a peaceful sanctuary where OTSC kids escape the city's escalating violence. Established in 1945, this tranquil retreat welcomes campers to a world of sunshine, poolside laughter, horseback riding adventures, and endless recreational activities.

Camp Mathieu in Wheaton, IL, is an overnight summer camp that offers a variety of activities, including hiking, campfires, biking, swimming, ghost stories, and more. Through the experience of learning, living together, playing, and taking responsibility, campers develop essential life skills that help shape them into great young adults.

Over the summer, up to 1000 camp experiences are enjoyed by OTSC kids either through the overnight Camp Mathieu experience or the Summer Day Camp at the Club, providing them with a fun and stress-free environment. Through a diverse range of activities, such as swimming and bike riding, kids experience growth, adventure, and creativity. Sports and athletics offer opportunities to build teamwork and stay active, gaining strength and confidence through a variety of games. Creative arts and music sessions spark imagination and allow for personal expression in a supportive atmosphere.

LEADERSHIP LEGACY

The leadership legacy of the Club is defined by a rare continuity: for decades, the Club has been led by individuals who were once "Club kids" themselves. This lineage began most notably with Ralph Campagna, who served the organization for over 50 years and became its first Executive Director to rise from the membership ranks. Ralph believed that in a neighborhood often defined by survival, the Club's most radical act was to provide a sanctuary where children could simply enjoy the ordinary, unburdened moments of childhood, like an uninterrupted game of checkers or a safe walk to the bus, that others take for granted. He called this philosophy "Casual Joy."

Arnett Morris, Ralph's protégé and successor, carried this torch with commitment and dedication. Having also found his salvation at the Club as a boy, Arnett learned directly from Ralph how to prioritize the physical and emotional safety of the members above all else. Becoming Executive Director in 2017, Arnett is a trusted figure for the community and a leader who understands the visceral reality of the streets. Throughout his tenure, he maintained the family atmosphere and high standards of the Club during a changing era in West Garfield Park. Together, Ralph and Arnett established a culture where leadership is not just a job, but a lifelong covenant. After 45 years of being a member, working for, and most recently leading as Executive Director, Arnett will be retiring early in 2026.

The Opportunity: Executive Director

The Club seeks a dynamic Executive Director (ED) to steward the organization through its next stage of growth, after the retirement of Arnett Morris. Balancing the rich history of the Club with a forward-looking vision, the leader will ensure that the Club remains a beacon of hope within the community. Reporting to the Board of Directors, the ED will build upon existing processes and procedures to further professionalize the organization and move the Club forward to new heights while preserving its rich history and legacy.

At the nucleus of this role are the kids. The successful candidate will be a caring, devoted individual who will be an inspiring role model to the youth participants, ensuring they feel safe and valued. Preserving the Club's unique essence and culture while expanding its reach within the Chicago area, the ED will be ingrained in the community, understand the immediate needs of the kids, and have the skills necessary to foster a vibrant, thriving environment for the staff, volunteers, and families.

The team at OTSC is small and mighty. Most roles on the 10-member team report into the Executive Director, with the VP of Finance and Operations dually reporting to the Board. The Club has an operating budget of \$2.5M, which supports all operations serving 2,500 children and an endowment of \$10M, of which a dedicated \$2M supports a full college scholarship program. The Club provides scholarships for at least 2 new college students annually.

The next leader will have the ability to balance the "head" (business acumen, structure, strategy) with the "heart" (integrity, trust, and love for the children) and ensure that the Club's return on investment continues to be what it has always been: thousands of young people going down the right path. As a strategic partner to the Board, the immediate focus of the incoming leader will be on the internal organizational structure and ensuring the Club runs as a tight, professional organization. This requires strong business acumen, financial literacy, and organizational skills to manage budgets and compliance. Once the internal operations are optimized, the focus will shift outward. The Club is often described as a "well-kept secret," and the Executive Director will serve as a dynamic external advocate, expanding the Club's presence beyond the community and sharing its story with a wider audience to secure its future.



Performance Objectives



EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP, VISION, AND ADVOCACY

- Provide strategic, mission-aligned leadership that sets the direction for the Club and strengthens its visibility and reputation in Chicago and beyond.
- Ensure operational excellence across all programs, staffing, facilities, and youth services through strong oversight and continuous improvement.
- Maintain a positive, accountable, and inclusive organizational culture that empowers staff and volunteers to perform at their highest level.
- Serve as the primary spokesperson for the organization, communicating effectively with external stakeholders, funders, and the broader community.
- Maintain strong knowledge of trends affecting youth, community safety, and nonprofit operations to inform long-range strategy.

PROGRAMMATIC IMPACT AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- Oversee the design, delivery, and evaluation of high-quality youth programs that align with the Club's mission and meet evolving participant needs.
- Use data and measurable outcomes to evaluate program effectiveness and guide enhancements or expansion opportunities.
- Build and sustain meaningful partnerships with community leaders, schools, agencies, and organizations that support program growth and youth engagement.
- Ensure safe, well-maintained facilities at both the Chicago Club and Camp in Wheaton, consistently upholding standards for youth protection and quality experiences.
- Strengthen community awareness of the Club's mission through active participation at events, public speaking, and relationship-building efforts.

Performance Objectives

BOARD, DONOR, AND VOLUNTEER RELATIONS

- Partner closely with the Board of Directors to support effective governance, strategic decision-making, and long-range planning.
- Provide timely and comprehensive updates to the Board regarding program outcomes, financial performance, organizational challenges, and strategic opportunities.
- Engage Board members collaboratively in fundraising, community engagement activities, and key organizational initiatives.
- Foster a respectful, trusting, and productive relationship between staff, volunteers, and Board members to advance organizational goals.
- Foster strong relationships with current donors and foundations, and build new relationships to further support the Club.

REVENUE DEVELOPMENT AND FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

- Oversee implementation of a comprehensive fundraising strategy that secures diverse revenue streams from individuals, corporations, foundations, and agencies.
- Oversight and support of all fundraising events, working closely with staff and volunteer leaders to ensure financial accuracy and strong outcomes.
- Collaborate with the VP of Finance & Operations to prepare and manage the organization's annual budget, ensuring fiscal responsibility and long-term sustainability.
- Maintain transparent financial reporting and ensure timely completion of audits and required filings.



The Qualified Candidate



Off the Street Club seeks a visionary, yet hands-on, leader to serve as its next Executive Director (ED). As the chief strategist and primary ambassador of the club, the ED will provide strategic leadership and operational oversight for Chicago's oldest boys and girls club. In this pivotal role, the successful candidate will bridge the gap between high-level strategy and community impact. Responsible for driving philanthropic (revenue) initiatives, cultivating relationships, and managing staff and volunteers, the ED will create an environment of casual joy where young people are empowered to reach their full potential.

SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS INCLUDE:

- An unwavering commitment to the mission, history, and values of Off the Street Club.
- Demonstrated success in delivering effective programming, leading, managing, and mentoring diverse teams while fostering a culture of collaboration, inclusion, and accountability.
- Strong analytic and strategic-thinking skills, with a demonstrated ability to create, implement, and monitor complex plans and then translate those plans into goals and concrete strategies.
- Proven success in resource development, including grant writing, donor cultivation, and stewardship.
- Exceptional interpersonal and communication skills, with the ability to serve as a persuasive ambassador who can engage and inspire diverse stakeholders.
- Track record in financial management, stewardship, and developing strategies to successfully increase revenue.
- A minimum of 5-7 years of progressive senior leadership experience within the nonprofit sector, with a strong preference for backgrounds in youth development or human services.
- Career track record that shows stability with an organization and capacity to develop and nurture relationships, culminating in overall success.
- A Bachelor's degree in Nonprofit Management, Business Administration, Social Work, or related experience is required.

The Club is open five days per week. During the school year, the Club is open Monday through Friday from 1:00 PM – 9:00 PM, with most kids arriving by 3:00 PM. Weekend times and evenings as necessary for events.

During the summer, the Club is open for Day Camp, Monday through Friday, at the North Karlov location from 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM, with kids arriving at 9:00 AM.

Summer camp runs for 8 weeks (mid-June to mid-August), and then the Club is officially closed for two weeks in late August.

The Executive Director will need to ensure there is staffing coverage for all OTSC operations (the Club and Camp).

Don't check off every box in the requirements listed above? Please consider applying anyway! Studies have shown that underrepresented communities - such as women, people of color, LGBTQ, people with disabilities, and immigrants - are less likely to apply to jobs unless they meet every single qualification. Off the Street Club is dedicated to building an inclusive, diverse, equitable, and accessible workplace that fosters a sense of belonging – so if you're excited about this role but your experience doesn't align perfectly with every qualification in the job description, we encourage you to still consider applying.



How To Apply

Compensation for this position was recently benchmarked by Off The Street Club and KEES, and it is in the fair market range. This position offers a competitive salary with strong benefits and is based on depth of experience. The salary range for this position will be in the upper \$150,000 range with a generous benefit package (100% health insurance coverage for employees), time off, and retirement contributions.

Off the Street Club is an equal opportunity employer and does not discriminate based on race, color, gender, religion, age, sexual orientation, national or ethnic origin, disability, marital status, veteran status, or any other occupationally irrelevant criteria.

[APPLY HERE](#)

To ensure confidential tracking of all applicants, no applications will be accepted via email. ALL INQUIRIES WILL BE HELD IN STRICT CONFIDENCE.

All candidate-submitted materials and credentials will be reviewed for consistency and accuracy. Candidates can expect that KEES will verify employment/academic/ background information both in the screening process and for the finalist(s) in a formal background check. KEES utilizes a 4-step screening process, the first of which is the formal Candidate Application. Applications are reviewed by the KEES team and advanced through various stages of inquiry and confirmation. Applications with specific cover letters will be given priority consideration, until a hire is made. All applicants will be notified of the outcome of the search. Based on the timing of your specific application, you are welcome to reach out for information on the timeline.

This search is being managed by Heather Eddy, President and CEO, and Randi Blasutti, Senior Project Manager of KEES. Questions may be addressed to rblasutti@kees2success.com.

About KEES

KEES (formerly Alford Executive Search) is a certified woman-owned nonprofit executive search firm dedicated to creating diverse teams with dynamic leadership in the nonprofit and public sectors. We offer a comprehensive range of services, including executive search, leadership development, compensation analysis, interim staffing, and HR support.

Launched in 2013, based on decades of prior work by the Founders, KEES is a leader and noted pioneer in DEIB-focused executive search and culture building. KEES is noted for bringing dynamic and under-radar candidates to the table, regularly placing industry veterans and first-time leaders alike. Recognized for two years in a row on the Hunt Scanlon Nonprofit Top 65, KEES leaders are sought-after experts in search, leadership development, and often first-time roles. To learn more, visit us at [KEES](#).